/XVI cont./

114 and malicious silence on the part of the Indian. Quite the contrary, Fr. Armellada is a witness to the facts, he studies, compares, arrives at practical conclusions, and then offers them to the reading public, which is so much interested in the life of those Indians.

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• 797 Until the Capuchin missionaries penetrated into those remote regions of the Venezuelan nation in 1930, little or nothing was known about them; nobody was interested in its natives, much less their language, which no one understood, and their customs, totally unknown to all. Scarcely a chance explorer or amateur went thither upon a daring tourist trip, in search of adventure; he passed like the bird through the air, without leaving a trace behind him. The Capuchin missionaries made the Gran Sabana their field of operations, to carry out the task that the Divine Master had set them, and to fulfill a sacred obligation to the National Government: to bring to the breast of the Church and into the pattern of the civilized world those authentic Venezuelans who still lived on the margin of religious and national events.

797 But the Capuchin missionaries of today have not wished to
114 abandon the way of yesteryear nor have they swerved from the glorious tradition of their elders. Therefore, together with the knowledge, culture, and civilization that they have carried into those regions, they have known how to avail themselves of time in the study of the language, of autochthonous customs, making an abundant collection of linguistic and ethnographic knowledge, to later offer them, as Fr. Armellada is doing, to the Nation and to the scientific world.

Proof is clear that they have not wasted time and that they have not spared any effort to carry on their work: religious work, patriotic work, cultural work, and scientific work. Whence once again are being proven correct those statements

/XVI cont./

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114 made by Don Arístides Rojas: "To the missionaries are to be credited the first work, not only upon the ancient history of America, but also the first rudiments upon geography, hydrography, and natural history, as well as the introduction and cultivation of the native products of Europe. The missionaries were the first teachers in the teaching of the peoples of the continent, and also the 'first ethnographers' of America. Without the philological lucubrations of the /XVII/ missionaries, modern science would not have been able to study the divers languages of the New World, nor to establish their scientific inter-relationship. In the study of the languages and races which populated America, the works of the missionaries form the indispensable and necessary base for the ethnography of a large portion of the human race." (5)

5. Arístides Rojas. Obras escogidas /Selected Works/. Paris, 1907. P. 201.

With consummate correctness the notable Mexican indigenist, Mr. Manuel Gamio, said: "How grandly in the historical perspective of Mexico stands out the work of those most worthy colonial investigators who, like Sahagún, Gante, Motolinía, and others, studied native groups from points of view which we today call ethnographic, sociological, psychological, etc, when the principles and methods of the social sciences were as yet just appearing, this work being of such importance that without it our knowledge of the social evolution of the Mexican people would be incomparably more defective and incomplete than it is now. The success obtained by such wise men (6) is

6. It is proper to clarify that Sahagún, Gante, and Motolinía were Franciscan religious and the first missionaries who came to Mexico.

/XVII cont./

797 114 due in great measure to the fact that, with logical judgment, they had first learned the languages and dialects of the autocthonous groups with whom they were in contact and they carefully made corresponding grammatical texts which, despite the understandable deficiencies which are evident in the light of modern knowledge, are indisputably the basis and point of departure of contemporary linguistics." (7)

[113]

7. Boletín indigenista. Vol. V. Mexico, D.F. December, 1945. No. 4. "La lingüística y el conocimiento de los indios monolingües /Linguistics and the Knowledge of Monolingual Indians/." P. 294.

The same could be said by us of the work carried out in the same way by the first missionaries who worked in Venezuela, as can clearly be deduced from a study by Arístides Rojas (8)

8. Arístides Rojas, Op. cit. "Las lenguas indígenas en Venezuela /Native Languages in Venezuela/." P. 230.

and from some biographic and bibliographic notes of P. C. de Carrocera (9) even though some pusillanimous souls have wanted

9. Venezuela Misionera, Year VII, 194[illegible]. P. 5ff.

to take this glory away from the Franciscan and Capuchin missionaries in Venezuela.

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/XVIII/

000 When we hear speak or see the writings of certain modern amateurs, about the natives, without their having bothered to take one step outside of the big cities in order to study the facts at the source, we cannot understand the confidence that this implies, inasmuch as in these writings and those discourses there is said only what has been read in authors, perhaps overesteemed or of confused imagination, so that in a single act, or simply in a simple statement of an Indian, they have tried to discover a rite, a religious ceremony, a divinity, a malignant spirit of vengeance, when the fact has simply been nothing but a simple joke or a mocking trick, poking fun at the simplicity and the stubborn curiosity of the investigator. These are indigenists such as we would call those of the desk or the classroom, who have never been in contact with the Indian nor even seen him other than on paper and in their ardent fantasy.

797 114 By contrast our missionaries, who have spent years and more years in communication with the Indians, will not dare to lay down principles nor throw out assertions, without first weighing them on the scale of honest, calm, dispassionate judgment. We venture to say more; that they will gather in council, they will discuss the observed fact as seen on several occasions, in very different circumstances, in order to draw practical conclusions, or perhaps, as has happened on more than one occasion, to leave judgment pending, awaiting another more propitious occasion and seek new data; because the Indian, sometimes crafty, often suspicious, and always withdrawn, did not wish to talk nor let himself be surprised in fraganti by the missionary observer.

These Ethnographic Studies that we present have the exceptional merit of long observation on the part of the author, who, without biases of any kind, without any predisposition of spirit, and without animosity against the defenseless natives, came to them, speaking their own language, and by this behavior as easy as it is secure, was able to project himself into

/XVIII cont./

797 114 the soul of those he wished to teach, favoring them with his confidence and affection and expecting the same from them. Did Fr. Armellada attain his goal? We can assert that, in general, he did indeed, for he succeeded in winning the confidence of the aborigines; whence the many and interesting data that he was able to collect and that he now offers to the reading public.

Perhaps someone less well acquainted with the matter might find exaggerated certain assertions by the author of this work; perhaps someone less scrupulous might rigorously find other established principles concerning the Indians; but we must always /XIX/ bear in mind that the Indian, as a people, is a child, the eternal minor, and that in addition he has to this date lacked religious principles, a cultural base, education and affection /afectos/ and as a result his works and his actions correspond to the isolated and sylvan life that until very recently he has led, and that it is not so easy as some would believe to change the nature and the life of the Indian overnight.

On the other hand, the fondness which Fr. Armellada professes towards the natives makes him diminish their natural defects and deficiencies that are found in them. And, in summation and conclusion, we could add, that he has wished to hew to the standards given by the Sacred Congregation of Propagation of the Faith in dealing with great prudence and maximum charity with native affairs, whether by word or through writing.

The author of this work has been most heedful of this standard, and rather has he preferred to sin by addition than by omission in his evaluations of certain customs of the Indians, trying to defend them and cover them with the cloak of benevolence.

Otherwise, the work answers a need and a question. To a need, in that up to date little or nothing has been known concretely of these Indians of the Gran Sabana, the Capuchin missionaries being the first to offer to the Nation and the world at large these interesting studies with technical comments

/XIX cont./

797 on the customs and their way of life. The work answers a
114 question, since throughout the Nation the Gran Sabana is spoken of, and every aware citizen feels the very natural desire to know what those aborigines are like, how they live, what they do, and where they come from.

114 Many of the questions the author deals with here have been put to him by curious observers who knew something or had isolated reports through the press about those unknown regions; others the author has put to himself and he resolves them effectively after diligent study and no little observation.

We repeat, this is not a complete and perfect treatise of the ethnography of the Pemón Indians of the Gran Sabana; they are serious and conscientious studies, which have close cohesion in themselves and which demand a later work to be published in time. Would that it may be thus, and that, saving economic difficulties, Fr. Armellada may be able to allure us with some more studies /XX/ from those he has in preparation. Meanwhile, we shall wait (10).

[13]

10. There have previously been published some works dealing with the Gran Sabana. Here are noted the principal ones:
a) "Tres años de Misión en los confines de Guayana /Three Years in a Mission within the Borders of Guiana/," by Fr. Baltasar de Matallana. Bol. Ven. de Ciencias Naturales, Vol. IV., No. 29, 1937.
b) La Música Indígena Taurepán /Taurepán Native Music/, by Rev. Fr. Baltasar de Matallalla /sic/, Caracas, 1938.

2:Armellada--11a M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

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The author of this work goes into the malocas /houses/ and into the soul of the Indians.

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Settlement and town a building at Kavanayén, formed by the Capuchin missionaries.

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Authentic type of native girl educated at the Mission with the Franciscan sisters.

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Straw hut which served as a house for the missionary and as a chapel where he celebrated the Divine Mysteries in Kavanayén.

2:Armellada--32a M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

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Mission natives happy and satisfied on a holiday.

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The missionary breaking ground to make it produce.

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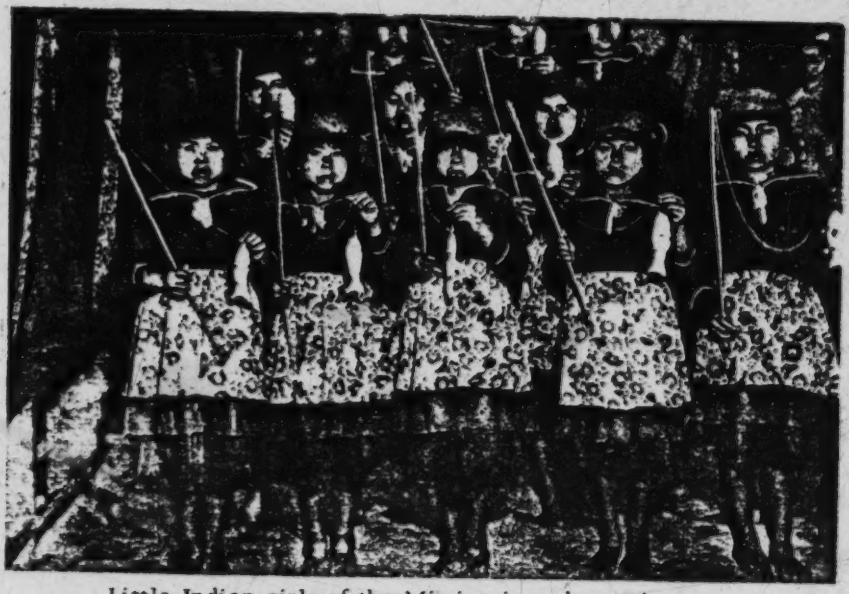
262 cooked down until thick, kumachí, and the extremely "hot" ají in various forms; products of fishing, fowling, and hunting, depending on the wealth of the region and the skill and weapons of the men, who preferentially dedicate their days to this.

535 59. On a par with the intemperance of the Indians in drinking, and a consequence of it, is their fondness for dances. For all peoples the proverb was made: "From the belly comes the dance"; but among the Indians, dance and kachirí form a perfect equation; in practice the words dancers and drunks can [534] be considered synonymous. The drum, made of monkeyskin, the rué pipe, the harsh yagrumo tube, and the happy rattles of the kevei begin and end their sounds precisely at the beginning and end of the pouring of parakarí, paiuá, or any of the other 527 kinds of kachirí. When Indians are interrogated about the 535 object of their fiesta trips, with equal candor and without the 273 slightest embarrassment they will answer that they are going to dance or that they are going to get drunk. And when they do their planting they often told me that they were planting things to get drunk with, rather than thinking of their bread.

797 60. Unfortunately for the Indians, the dance, accompanied 535 by the use of alcohol or alcoholic beverages, had in the area 273 around Roroima, in the three nations grouped about this hydro- 171 graphic node (Venezuela, Brazil and British Guiana), Protestant propagandists, called Hallelujahns. The imaginative lucidity and that indefinable sensation of liberation from the material, which momentarily seem communicated by rhythmic dancing and alcohol and other drugs and infusions, were presented to the Indians by the said propagandists as a celestial illustration, liberation of the spirit and communication with the supersensible world.

This was raining on sop, since the Indians were already on their own too inclined toward drink, and that theory of the liberation of the spirit was also that of their piaches: so that the fondness for liquor was stuck into them like a clinched nail.



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Little Indian girls of the Mission in a dramatic performance.

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One of the many rivers which run through the Gran Sabana and a beautiful grove of moriche palms.

2:Armellada--53a M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

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With the greatest confidence does the missionary come into the presence of the natives, since they see in him their great benefactor.

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100. The colleague who asked me the question about the piaches' arts and tricks particularly consulted me about my opinion concerning the possible conflict or the possible opposition between the piaches' ideas and Christian ones and about the correctness or not of administering our sacraments to them.

My personal opinion is that the piaches are neither more nor less fit to receive our Christian teachings than other Indians and with these teachings the sanctifying sacraments of baptism, confession, communion, matrimony, etc. I do not find any essential conflict between their beliefs and ours, which could make the sacraments invalid or illicit; I believe that all that is needed is to complete and modify some of their beliefs. I believe also that the Indians, like other simple people, do not handle ideas as do more logical and intellectual people, by comparing and analyzing, and as a result, letting some ideas lead to others; I believe rather that they proceed by stratifying ideas, that by placing them in different planes they do not seem to be contradictory, although they might sometimes really be so.

There would occur, according to this opinion of mine, in the intellectual order, what happens in matters of garments, which is, that many Indians under our clothing retain their old garters, bracelets, and loin-cloths, and of course, tattooing cannot be changed like a shirt.

101. It is clearly necessary to get rid of the idea that the piaches are invokers of Satan or the devil, that they offer /46/ sacrifices to the devil, or that they are possessed by him when they are in the trance of piachería. They can well be possessed by the spirit of tobacco or of other vegetal plants; and they can be called invokers of the devil, or better, of devils, taking this word in its etymological sense of genii or personifications of natural forces. This idea can be seen worked out more thoroughly in the chapter that we shall devote to the study of the religion of these Indians.

2:Armellada--74b M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

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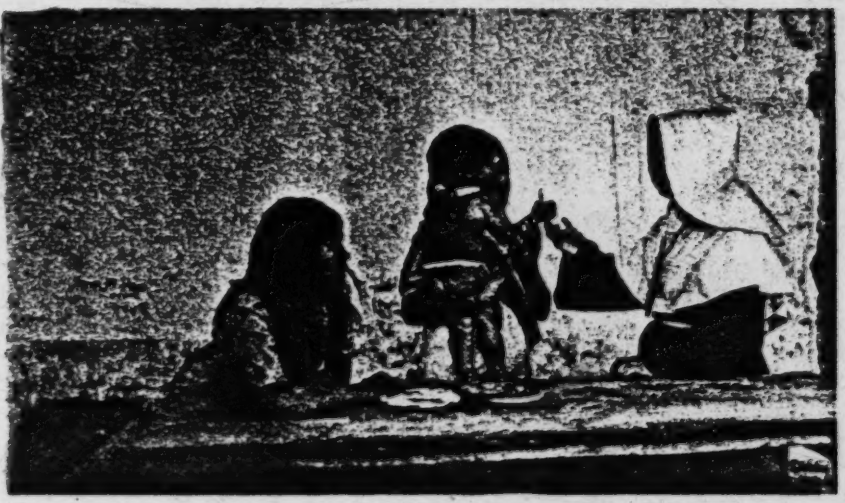

Native mothers with their children receiving gifts from a missionary sister.

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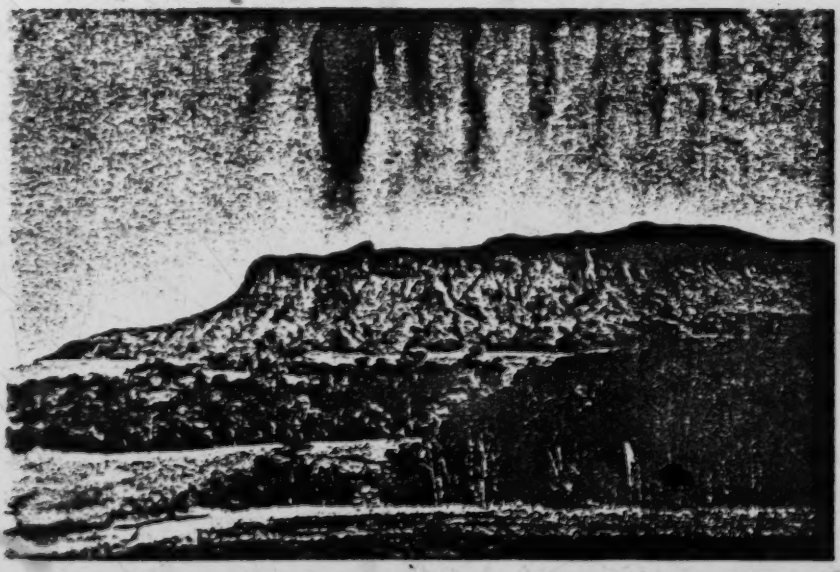

This great stone mass and these woods tell us of the secrets enclosed in the Gran Sabana.

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142. Upon dealing with this subject, we have accidently had come to mind the story of that first fratricide, who was not satisfied with the promise of God that he would not die a perfidious death and thus lived an errant and fugitive life on earth, persecuted by the voice of blood.

And although we said at the beginning that the Indians are thoroughly imbued with the concept of Kanaima, it is hoped that little by little they will be abandoning it, since if they were at one time perfidious and bloody in their vengeance, now we have redeemed them from their barbarism, they have the right to enjoy that peace promised to men of good will.

143. To convince the Indians, and those who may read this, of the ideas here expounded, we are going to relate a few facts that we know with certainty.

a) On a certain occasion a missionary, who was inspecting their agriculture, thinking exactly about this matter of the Kanaima, tried to imitate the whistle that the Indians attribute to him, with such success and with such bad luck that an Indian who happened to have gone to get water, dropping the camaza, took off running like a buck, and crying in a loud voice got into the hammock shaking with fever.

b) Some travelers, camped near the Kamá waterfall and who were accompanied by Indians, out of idleness got the idea of shouting "Kanaima, Kanaima," and then, however hard they tried to persuade the Indians that it had been a joke, it was not possible to do so, since the Indians swore that they had seen him and they spent the rest of the night in painful vigil. /67/

c) A few years ago there in Akurimá lived two Indians, called Joaquín and Alberto; the first, who had a very bad previous history, since with other companions he had killed three civilized persons while they were sleeping, wanted to wreak vengeance on the second, with whom he had had a strong altercation. For this purpose he put on the clothing in which his mother had given birth to him, painted himself up well with annatto and other cosmetics, and in this strange form presented

/72 cont./

538 ingenious, and industrious, sent them in an airplane all good
829 things, but that we, the Venezuelans, don't give them to them and keep them for ourselves. And thus it can be seen quite clearly that, far from thanking us for what we do give them, it is we who should be thankful and obligated because they spare our lives. /Plate appears here./ /73/

797 Another reason why the Indians sometimes are not grateful,
829 as they should be, for gifts and personal sacrifices by the missionaries, is the propaganda, already widespread, already begun by the Creoles established among them. These latter frequently try to deceive them, saying to them, for example, that the Government is sending them many things, but that we are appropriating them for ourselves.

But the truth of the case is precisely the opposite; that is, that the governmental allotments do not even cover the personal expenses of the missionaries, much less provide for making gifts to the poor Indians. In any case, they are ignorant of this; and thus, because of the ignorance of some and the envy of others, this legend of the magnificent and generous government is a twin sister of the aforesaid one of the Makunaimá; and the final result is the repellent ingratitude, only attenuated by the lack of knowledge at the bottom of things. But, however, if Creoles who know how to read and writers who know how to write, who can get their information from the Gaceta Oficial /Official Gazette/ and the annual Memoir of the Ministry of Interior Relations of the laughable quantities allotted for the missions, are ignorant or pretend to be ignorant of these things and therefore want to deny our personal sacrifices and our work for our country, is it strange that the Indians are ignorant of the truth and without blame?

431 158. It can well be said that gifts among the Indians do
437 not exist; everything among them is purchase-sale or lending. "If you give to those who give to you, what fun is there in it? Do the gentiles not perhaps do this?"

/77 cont./

796 169. Principles. Those who are interested in the education of the Indians and in elevating them in culture and assimilating them to us should remember as incontrovertible pedagogic axioms: /78/

1) that "nature does not go forward by leaps and bounds" and that therefore it is very natural that the goat runs back to the mountain and the savage to the forest;

2) that "like seeks like," and therefore, when trying to form a family in an orderly way by means of marriage, it is natural that they seek their relatives;

3) that "it is better to be a mouse's head than a lion's tail," and that therefore when they feel themselves masters of themselves and ready for the burdens of life, they wish to live in their own land rather than in a strange one.

797 170. Conversions. We are all in accord that a man must be prepared for the struggle for life for his environment and ordinarily in his own environment. The natives (individually or collectively) ought not to be extracted or transplanted permanently from their lands. From this results the failure of many of the ancient reductions /conversions/, a method which unfortunately still has its proponents and not entirely among missionaries. This is a case of the application of the theory of the least resistance: what is desired is that the Indians come to us so that we won't have to go to the Indians.

Many propose that collections of Indians be made (if not raids) and that artificial colonies be built like so many zoos.

By contrast the national laws of the Missions, and the missionaries with them, affirm that the Indian should be educated in his environment and that only transitorily can he be authorized by the Director of the Mission to visit civilized centers. Therefore the Most Excellent Señor Apostolic Vicar of the Caroní writes in his official report of 1944: "Someone might be able to advocate that they be removed into civilized towns so that the contact and living together with civilized people might work toward the completion of the work of the

/78 cont./

• 797 missionaries. But experience has taught us that none of those whom we have removed from the Missions has gained in morality, respect for property, sense of responsibility, and love of work." Educators should go live among those being educated and there in the face of the reality of facts and in the face of concrete difficulties, they should try to raise the level of their own and others' lives. And there is no doubt that, in a sea of difficulties, in a hostile geographic environment, etc....they will learn (as is said of the Supreme Missionary, Jesus Christ) benignity, patience, obedience, etc....Let the educators go in among them.

And even when educated in their environment, in their own lands, the Indians ought not to be deprived of their ancestral ways of life and of their own instruments (either intellectual or physical), but only slowly and to the degree that their adaptation to our ways and the acquisition of our instruments become possible to them.

Humboldt particularly affirms this when speaking of language as an intellectual instrument, best for conserving /79/ the psychology of the race itself and the best agglutinative agent for relating families together. And Simpson warns very correctly this same thing about physical cultural means, since there exists the danger that the Indians may forget or scorn their own arts and not learn ours, and this makes their life difficult with the anxiety to acquire what they see in others. Thus, for example, it is preferable that the Indians live naked but well fed, rather than well dressed but lacking food.

171. Practical cases. It is better (and there are examples) that the Indian use moriche sandals and tend to his chores rather than that he attempt to buy shoes at the expense of prolonged absences from his fields and his home. It is better that the Indians live dispersed, each one on his hilltop with an abundance of water, fish, and agriculture, than to live on a beautiful plain, with well lined-up houses, but lacking proper means of life. Such is the practical case of the Goagiro /Goajiro/ settlement called "Ziruma" at the doors of Maracaibo.

797 /79 cont./

[177] The Indians have very good dispositions; they do not resist our civilization, nor do they refuse to learn our language; nor are they systematically opposed to exogamy or matrimonial union with those of other areas. But they ought not to be educated for our benefit, but for their own; we should not seek our own well-being in them, but to dedicate ourselves in truth to procuring for them their own physical and moral well-being.

172. Maternal love. One of the causes which, in the native oral literature, appears as the most frequent reason for their flights, is that attraction which in our language is called patriotic love and maternal love. And it is quite clear that, far from being a reprehensible feeling, this is on the contrary a most noble feeling and one worthy of all praise. And this is what those who would like to always keep next to them the Indians whom they have educated should think of, without thinking about what greater rights the mothers who bore and nursed them have.

A short time ago an employee today attached to a Venezuelan embassy abroad said to me (without realizing that I was a missionary) that all work carried out on behalf of the Indians was useless, that missionaries were wasting time and energy and the Government its money. I replied to him that I was a missionary and that we missionaries had a higher opinion of his Indian compatriots, and that far from wasting time and energy, the fruit gathered both in former times as well as in the 20 years of this second stage of the missions was sufficient.

[113] 173. Results. Today I can refer to Cuaderno 42 of the Conferencia Interamericana de Agricultura, entitled Labor de los Padres Capuchinos de la Misión del Caroní /Labor of the Capuchin Fathers in the Mission of the Caroní/, by /80/ the Reverend Father Baltasar de Matallana. I recommend the reading of this, particularly pages 73-80, since they expound clearly and simply our mission methods and their effects.

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797 I also recommend the reading of the official report of the Most Excellent Señor Apostolic Vicar of the Caroní, previously cited, concerning "Results obtained from the natives with regard to their incorporation into national life."--(Memoria de Relaciones Interiores/Memoirs of Interior Relations/, Year 1945, p. 355.)

And the final conclusion of all is our emphatic and energetic affirmation that the Indians are, in effect, regenerated, and against facts no theoretical arguments are of any value. And if their regeneration is slow, this is due to the fact that the economic means of which we dispose are minimal. And if there were invested in the Missions what is invested in Frontier Guards or what is invested in Foreign Colonists, and if preference were given to the aid of internal immigration of the native races rather than the expensive protection of foreign immigrants, by this date a different rooster would be crowing for us and there still would not be crowing to us the "poor man in his hut asked for liberty."

174. Proverb. A popular proverb says: "He who makes one basket makes a hundred, if he is given material and time."

Give us missionaries good economic aid; not a few miserable pennies drop by drop; set forth lavish budgets for the Indians and not just a few crumbs from the national wealth, and they will see how we missionaries, who formerly built towns along the whole length and breadth of America, will build them now as well, and they will see how the Indians will come forth "to where there is and to where they are giving."

To hope that we might attract the Indians with good words is as though we were fishing with a hook that had neither lure nor bait.

Finally, it is necessary to calm our impatience and remember that "Zamora was not won in an hour," and that the total regeneration of the Indians is a great work and undertaking involving much time and several generations. Time does not pardon what is done without it; what is done too fast rapidly goes to pieces; what is slapped together does not last.

2:Armellada--107 M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

/80 cont./

797 175. N. B. Reading the Memoiria y Cuenta del Ministerio de Relaciones Interiores /Memoir and Account of the Ministry of Interior Relations/, I find that the budget of only one year of the work colony "El Dorado" is as high as 400,000 bolivares, a quantity which was not given to the mission of the Caroní in 13 years. /Four plates appear here./

/81/

Chapter XXI

What Material Culture Do the Indians Have?

176. Culture and civilization. 177. Material culture. 178. A brief enumeration. 179. The influence of European civilization. 180. The division of arts and labor between the sexes. 181. The fool knows more in his own house....

176. The question, such as was asked us by a "lover of the Indians," went as follows: What material civilization do these Indians have? We have changed the word civilization to culture in order to avoid confusion of words, which necessarily engenders confusion of ideas.

Civilization is a word which should be reserved to indicate the higher degrees of complete material and spiritual culture, obtained by means of organization into cities, a complete and perfect society within itself, from the union of which come forth State and Nation and will eventually come forth the International Human Community, a goal as yet not reached. By contrast, culture means culture, a dominion over nature or of the faculties themselves by means of reflection and instruments, a personal thing of man among all the beings of creation and which (at least in its lowest degrees) no man is lacking, whatever he may be and to whatever subrace he may belong, since every man is homo faber, maker and artisan.

2:Armellada--107b M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

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First buildings covered with roof built by the Mission of Santa Elena.

/84 cont./

797 122 a case and despite the value of this aid, during the first days all will seem to him /85/ confused and tangled, and in those strange cries, which break his eardrums, he will not make out sentences, words, nor even syllables. And nonetheless it is necessary to make a grammar! Days pass, the months, and years... and happily the time comes when the grammar is done. And that language which once seemed a heap of inarticulate cries, now appears with the parts of speech, with its system, its rules, its philosophy, and its beauty. The natives themselves, who speak it with surprising correctness, are incapable of saying how it was formed. This is another task which the missionary must carry out with ingenuity and reasoning."

797 185. It would seem that we missionaries and true indigenists must still fight hard in defense of the Indians in this and other matters and to refute what imperceptive writers say against the Indians, whom they only know by references or by a hasty glimpse, without a long stay among them nor daily, unhurried study.

000 First it is denied that the Indians have a well-formed language; at most they are conceded to have a tiny vocabulary without any logical grammar. And then, when they have been convinced of the falsity of these assertions, with the vain pretext of unitarianism (not to say totalitarianism), they want the native languages, whatever may be their intrinsic value, their literary productions, and the number of natives who speak them, to disappear by degrees or by force. The North Americans confess that they even went so far as to apply punishments to the children; but they confess their error and they are now on the way back while others still are going to bring punishment upon their own heads. There will come, God willing, a coexistence of Spanish with the native languages (since the Indians are neither rebellious nor incapable of learning our language); then there will come the disappearance of the latter

2:Armellada--118a M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

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Rudimentary loom on which the Indian woman of the Sabana makes her clothes.

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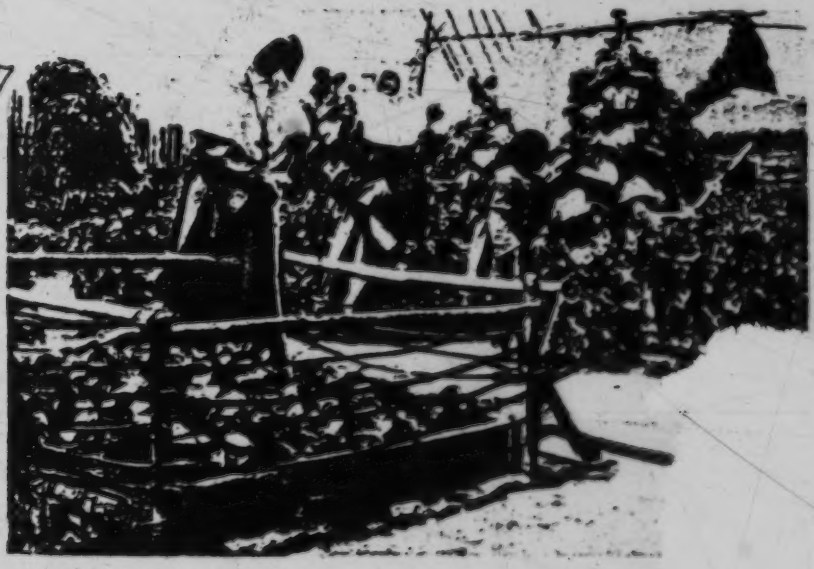

Beautiful plantings of greenery at the Capuchin Missio...

/91 cont./

lack of those who chant "extra chorum": and as a small sample read what I now transcribe: "One of the characteristic qualities of man is, as has been said, religiousness....But what is certain is that many individuals, even among the most civilized, do not have this belief nor this impulse, and are content to live without any care for what they do not understand, lacking fear, admiration, and gratitude, which are the three motives for every religious concept....In this man is inferior to the dog, whose abnegation and fidelity to the person who gives him his daily bread knows no limits and whom he considers as a God more than as a master. This animal certainly believes in some thing superior to himself." (Topinard)

Thanks for that about being inferior to dogs, and let us continue, since it can quite clearly be seen that, when he tells us that "some individuals" do not have religion, it is implicitly conceded that "many" do have it.

199. Upon attempting to study noncodified religions not compiled into a body of doctrine; that is, without Creed or Confession of dogma, without Tables or Decalogue of morality, and without a regulator of the form of worship; upon studying religions whose elements are found diluted in practical life, one must have a very watchful eye, a great genius for observation, and a long period of living among /92/ the natives. For lack of this last element Dr. G. Gaylor Simpson fell into such a grave error as to deny all religion to the Pemón Indians.

He asked them (or rather, he asked one or two of the semi-civilized ones, with whom he was able to communicate) what they thought about God, the soul, the other life, etc. They answered (to the consumer's taste) that some Indians talked of those things, but that the rest did not concern themselves with such. Conclusion, even flimsier than the premises: the Indians do not have any religion nor do they concern themselves about this and those who have received instruction from the missionaries live in a pained and sad state and are even neurotic.

/92 cont./

114 200. Had the Doctor asked the same Indians, when he was trying to make the grammar of their language, what they thought about the verb, the noun, and the other parts of speech, they would have given him the same answer; that they knew nothing of this nor did they worry themselves about it. Had he asked them, when he was trying to describe their houses, what was a circle and a cone, they would have answered him that they knew nothing about this. Had he interrogated them about the musical scale, they would again have answered that they didn't even understand what he was asking them. And he would have concluded, following the same logic, that the Pemón Indians had no parts of speech, nor houses with a circular base nor with a conical roof, nor did they have any melodies; and that only some ex-pupils of the missionaries had any very clear ideas of such things. That is not the method.

The Indian speaks his language and from it one must deduce its grammar; he lives his life and from it one must deduce his moral code and his beliefs; he sings his song and from it one must deduce his music; he weaves his baskets and from them one must deduce the type of weaving and the designs he executes.

It is clear, and very well do I understand it, that the study of beliefs and customs, as a very intimate and at times even reserved matter, needs much time and patience to be studied, very much more than the study of their language and their manual arts; but for this very reason it is a matter and a terrain closed to lightning-explorers, who want to come and kiss the Saint without standing in line.

797 201. It will be said to me that we missionaries come
114 prejudiced in favor of the Indians, inclined to praise and defend everything which is theirs and to see in them primitive man, only just come from the hands of God. To this I answer with the same frankness as Mons. Le Roy in the prologue to his so often cited book, La Religion de los Primitivos: "When I arrived at the mission I also had the ideas which were then in

/92 cont./

797 vogue: fetishistic Indians, without any religion, without family, 114 without morality, worshipers of animals, /93/ trees, rocks, anything." Only by dint of living among them and through observation did we manage to free ourselves of these bad prejudices and as many others about their language, culture, organization, etc. So that our ideas are not to be suspected of being partial.

All of us who have been there, in contact with the reality of facts and very far away from books, have on more than one occasion exclaimed that "the university teaches more of life than the life of the university," and we have quoted the saying, slightly exaggerated, of Nietzche: "Thoughts that arise when walking are the only ones of value." We do not in any way scorn books, but we do not subordinate to them the living reality, which is more varied than all invented systems, but vice versa.

Apart from this, the fundamental ideas were always before us; thus, turning to the comparison between Religion and Language, just as the majority of grammatical categories or organization turn out to be the same, regardless of variation in vocabulary, thus it will also happen in religious categories or phenomenology, regardless of the variety of shadings.

Something, and even a good deal, has been said about the religion of the Indians when dealing with their magic and their 771 moral sentiments. For now let it suffice to say that the Pemón 797 Indians are not irreligious nor areligious, they have their own native religion; further, for several generations they have been receiving the influence of our Christian religion, as we have also said about our European culture. Believe me, my dear questioner, "in verbo magistri," since you have been so kind as to call me "Doctor in Pemón"; and it shall be left to the next chapter to develop this most important and thorny question: "What is the religion of the Pemón Indians?"

2:Armellada--129a M-5 (1933-1945) 1946 SS16 Pemon SS16

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In the midst of weaving under the supervision of the Missionary Sister.

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Next to the Mission Chapel these married couples of Venezuelan Sabana aborigines pose with the missionaries so that the public may recognize the work for country which is being carried out among them.

173 Any interpretation of this legend must be labeled conjecture and hardly
101 even scientific inference, let alone fact. Nevertheless, it could mean more
[131] or less this: That there was a tribe called Kamarakoto living somewhere north of the Cuyuní and east of the Caroní in colonial times; that some members of this tribe fled before the attacks of other Indians (cf. Ramón Bueno) or from the missionaries and other white invaders (the present Kamarakoto belief; the dislike of the Indians for the missionaries can also be read between the lines of Ramón Bueno) and settled down in or near Kamarata; that they were there absorbed into an Arekuna population already present or one that drifted in from the east, and that the resultant mixed tribe eventually became wholly Arekuna
[144] in speech, culture and physique. A weak point is that the "ancient Kamarakotos" must themselves have been physically identical with the Arekunas, because the Kamarakotos are so today and would hardly be if they were mixed with another tribe of different physical character.

173 More recent events are usually treated with equal vagueness. The most
921 definite is the memory of a great tribal war, more than two generations ago, between the Kamarakotos and surrounding tribes, particularly the Mwerwan, a tribe said to have lived on the Caroní and now to be extinct. A dispute over fishing rights between normally friendly tribes led to a general and bloody war. There has been no warfare within the last two generations.

173 The cacique, Alejo Calcaño, told me that a "bishop" (i.e. a priest or
● 797 missionary of some sort) visited this region some thirty years ago, in Alejo's life-time, distributed presents, but did not preach or teach, and forthwith disappeared never to be seen again. I have not been able to find any record of such a visit. Other Indians mention brief visits of missionaries (the same, or others?) which they place at anything from a generation to five years ago. The recently established missions of the Alto Caroní have not yet come in contact with the Kamarakotos.

Basis of This Study

101 The materials for the present study were gathered during several weeks'
114 residence in Kamarata, the valley south of Auyán-tepúi, early in 1939 with the Comisión Exploradora de la Gran Sabana of the Ministerio de Fomento of
122 the Venezuelan Govemment. I cannot too heartily thank all the officials concerned for their generosity and their splendid co-operation in making this work possible for me, and I wish particularly to mention the Minister of Fomento, Dr. Manuel Egaña, and my companions and the leaders of the expedition, members of the Servicio Técnico de Minería y Geología, Drs. Victor M.
114 Lopez, Santiago Aguerrevere, Carlos Delgado, and Carlos Freeman. Thanks to them and to the excellent equipment and organization of the expedition, I

551/177 Practically all of the adult men of this group have such names. Small children ordinarily do not and a few young men or adolescents do not. Of 23 females recorded in detail, only 6 lacked Spanish names and 4 of these were young girls. On the other hand, as far as noted, none of the allied Indians from outside the central group have Spanish names. The Indians without Spanish names at first maintained, without exception, that they had no names at all. Later, when more intimate relationships were established, it was admitted that all do have Indian names, but even then all my informants absolutely refused to reveal what these were in any instance.[103] The Indians seldom address each other by name, rarely by a Spanish name and, as far as I could learn, never by a true Indian name unless in the utmost family privacy.

The reluctance of most Indians, and especially Caribs and Arawaks, to use or even to reveal their personal names, even among Indians and of course especially to foreigners, is well known. See for instance Koch-Grünberg (1923, Vol. III, pp. 140 seq.), who found this to be true among the Taurepánes. The feeling seems to be that this name is an essential part of the personality, the ego, which suffers when it is revealed, and that knowledge of it also confers power which may be used against the owner. The Kamarakotos certainly have this feeling to a high degree. Possibly in this case it is reenforced by the desire of the cacique to make his tribe appear as "civilized" as possible and I suspect that he prohibited the revelation of any Indian names. The usual reason given, however, for refusal to reveal an Indian name was that it would "hurt" the person named.

Caribs do ordinarily have nicknames, as opposed to personal names, which are also generally used only rarely and with care but which are at least known to all members of the tribe. In conversation I heard Kamarakotos use words apparently of address, in some cases animal names, that I believe to be Indian nicknames, but I did not confirm this because to attempt to do so would have destroyed their frankness in speaking before me. In fact what seems to have happened in the central group is that Spanish names are now used essentially as nicknames or in substitution for Indian nicknames. Two or three Kamarakotos who had been in Venezuelan settlements claimed to have been baptized. The cacique has given names to some of his people and others have received them as presents from travelers or have conferred them on themselves.[104] Some have only one Spanish name, but others use both given names and surnames. The European system of hereditary surnames is quite foreign to any Indians and the surnames in use among the Kamarakotos are not really employed as such, a son does not take his father's surname nor does a wife take her husband's. In one case brother and sister did use the same surname, but she retained this and did not exchange or add her husband's when she married, nor did she give her or her husband's surname to their children. Brothers do not necessarily have the same surname, nor do father and son.

103, 104 [see footnotes on p 319, category 116 - Analyst]

*285 176 [128] As regards baskets, this classification is based on that of Roth (1924) with some modification and omission of a few non-Kamarakoto minor subdivisions.

Allied Indians, including the Taurepánes, make a wide variety of mats, trays, and sack- or bag-like baskets by plain plaiting, especially from separated strips of one or two moriche leaves, left attached to the midrib (Fig. 54). Koch-Grünberg illustrates typical Taurepán specimens and Roth illustrates many from British Guiana and gives exhaustive details of their construction. Such basketry, the materials for which are everywhere and require almost no preparation, is very quickly and easily made and can serve almost any purpose to which basketry is put among these tribes (the only important exceptions are presses and sieves), but it is crude, relatively impermanent, and esthetically unsatisfactory and has only speed and ease of manufacture to recommend it. It is the lazy man's basketry and it speaks well for the Kamarakotos that they make almost no use of it. They are, of course, capable of such plaiting and *285 can produce it on order, but they do not like it or ordinarily use it. Aside from large door mats, for which this is the best material and technique, I saw no pieces of plain plaited work actually in use among them and only one, a wakawa', that had been made by them for their use, and this had been abandoned. [178] [297] In marked contrast, the Taurepánes, at least in the vicinity of the mission where native skill seems to be rapidly degenerating, make and use much plain plaited basketry.

The large mats used primarily to close doors at night and secondarily as floor mats and even as sunshades are plaited from two pinnate leaves of palms such as the kunwada. The midribs are laid together to form one edge of the mat and the pinnae are plaited together, usually by single one-over-two twilling, and their small ends braided into an edge for the other side.

The one really native plain plaited Kamarakoto basket seen was a wakawa', which is used in exactly the same way as an akai'. It is made of two split moriche (kwai) leaves, the stems projecting at the upper corners of the back. Back and sides are plaited in one-over-two twill and the ends of the strands braided into loops at the lower corners, then into a lower rim and finally into a median braid up the front (part away from the person carrying), ending freely [482] (see Fig. 55). A back thong is tied to the stems as a head strap.

Turning to more elegant types of basketry, the common mat, o. olori (Fig. 56 C), is made of manare, the commonest basketry fiber, and notwithstanding its simplicity is usually carefully and handsomely made. [171] They are square and are identical with what Roth calls the Akawai fan (indeed he notes that these occur among the Arekunas and are by them also used as mats). They are of closed twilled woven plaiting, constantly one-over-three except at points on the diagonals, edges, and center where variations are required by the pattern. Their peculiarity is that the strands in the two directions are really the same, each strand doubling at the edge and returning into the

754 principal reason why Kamarakotos are very reluctant to build houses in the
P24 forests and hesitant about traversing them, although they do so not infrequently.
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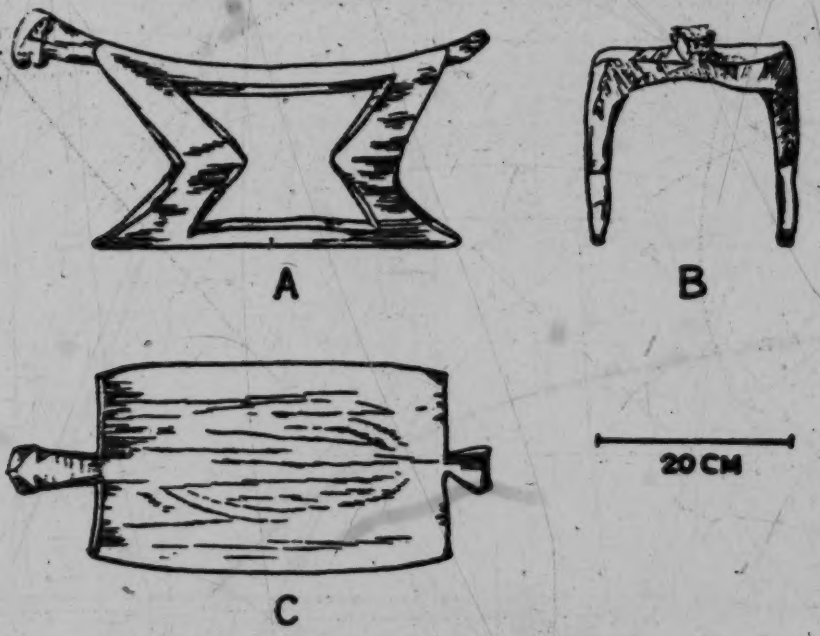

Fig. 76 — Kamarakoto Piache's Bench.
A typical murei, hewn from a single block of wood.

754 Although the kanaimaton play an important role as the theoretical instigators of physical diseases, it is also certain that belief in them produces serious and even mortal illnesses which are wholly psychic in origin. An Indian who is physically perfectly well sometimes believes that he has been attacked by a kanaima, lies down in his hammock, and refuses to rise or to eat, lapsing into a completely listless state, withdrawing into himself, paying no attention to his surroundings, and often developing a fever. If the kanaima is not successfully exorcized, the victim will die of this primarily psychic (but of course quite real) ailment just as surely as if it were primarily physical.

754 The following is not repeated as a story that I believe, for I find the
797 alleged act of the priest quite incredible, but as one that the Kamarakotos be-
[1H] lieve and that casts a little further light on this difficult subject. They informed me that a mission priest stationed with a related tribe one day sent an Indian boy alone to an isolated conuco in the forest and then slipped around by another way and hid there. When the boy arrived, the priest shouted without showing himself. This was a mortal attack on the boy with the priest acting as kanaima

754 and the boy returned, took to his hammock, developed a high fever, and was
[297] at death's door when he was finally saved by the priest's confessing his fault to
[128] the boy and withdrawing the kanaima influence. I personally did not witness such a case, but some of the cases of illness related to me by the Indians appeared to involve no possible physical cause and the statements of reliable non-Indian witnesses, traveling both among the Kamarakotos and among several allied tribes, leave no doubt that such cases do really occur.[175]

Other Medical and Similar Magic.

755 Although the piache is the magician and the physician, the use of magic is not entirely confined to him. There are some spells, not the exclusive property of the piache, that can be recited by the victim and by his friends, although these apparently are not considered really effective in severe cases or cases surely involving a kanaima. Koch-Grünberg gives the texts of several such spells from the Taurepáne. Some of them are related to birth, puberty, and other critical physical events and they constitute a simple sort of medical ceremonial which has magical implications but which cannot really be called religious. The idea of invocation of supernatural beings, an essentially religious aspect that is present in the activities of the piaches, is very attenuated or quite absent in these.

755 There are also medical dances which are analogous to these simpler
535 spells and are called generically eremba. The most common is the okõyima-eremba, "big snake medicine-dance," which is effective against real bites and against ulcers, which are theoretically believed to be bites. No special costume is worn except bead necklaces and unlike social dances the men and women dance in separate groups. The dance begins at dusk and continues until the following dawn.

756 There is also a piache's dance, called mari, which is danced by every-
535 one but led by a piache who sings and shouts. I could learn of no special religious significance for this dance but its ascription to the piache (whereas ordinary social dances are led by the cacique or any competent to?-esa?) suggests that it must have had some such particular significance originally.

535 It is probable that most dances once had some magic significance if they
[289] did not definitely arise as magic or religious ceremonials. Thus the parichara
[533] songs given elsewhere are in effect quite typical hunting spells. The present-
[224] day Kamarakotos, however, informed me that the dances (excepting the eremba, of course) have for them absolutely no utilitarian, magical, or religious significance and that they are danced solely for pleasure. Certainly they are not treated as anything mystical and show no trace of true ritualism.

224 Aside from medicine, magic does not figure to any great extent in Kama-
[289] rakoto life but there is some hunting magic. Typical hunting magic with a

175 [see footnote on p. 328, category 116 - Analyst]

193 127 88. Judging from my own observations and from those of Koch-Grünberg and others, this suffix seems to be translated in the wrong person throughout Baltasar's list, uya being first, not second, person.

126 153 195 192 89. When we had been taking photographs several small boys followed us and each other around pointing and shouting "tsə?" in imitation of the shutter. This seemed about to become the word for "camera" in Kamarakoto, but apparently it gave way to the word retorata, from "retratar" which they often heard us say in connection with photography and which they apparently decided was the word for the object used rather than for the process.

197 90. But there are surely unknown or at least unfixed dialects within a relatively short distance to the west and a longer distance to the south that are very closely allied to Kamarakoto.

197 192 [439] 91. This is valid evidence of the close affinities, but it should be noted that it is considerably aided by the fact that the Kamarakotos know a good many Taurepán words as foreign words. They are inveterate traders and have acquired a smattering of several other Carib dialects, words that they know but do not use among themselves.

101 114 92. He was under the erroneous impression that the other Arekunas were forest tribes, which would have suggested a real distinction, but in fact they are sabana Indians to just the same extent and in just the same way as the Taurepanes.

101 [103] [797] [114] 93. But no good local name has been proposed. The Kamarakotos call them the Arekunas of Luepa, from what is now (but has only recently become) the principal place of that region. The missionaries of Luepa and Santa Elena tend to confine the name Arekuna to these Indians of the northern part of the Gran Sabana, a usage that seems to me extremely inconvenient and contrary to precedent and usage either native or European.

197 114 94. It is not a Kamarakoto vocabulary but resembles Kamarakoto more than does Taurepán in some respects and differs more than does Taurepán in others. I have gone through the vocabulary carefully but have not given any comparisons with it here. Its status is thoroughly unsatisfactory for dialect studies and the Arekuna language as a whole is better known in the Taurepán dialect. I have not been able to find anywhere in Koch-Grünberg's five volumes that he states, within several hundred miles, where his "Arekuna" is actually spoken, or even any assurance that it is not a mixture of words from several different Arekuna dialects.

Casapare
Pemon 5516

? Y 648 439 P [131]

/183 cont./

At the other end of the island of Maraca the territory of the Taurepan (Pemón) begins, and it is interesting to note that about the year 1911 the Casapare, under the command of one captain Kuranaí, had established peaceful contacts with the neighboring Caribe for the purpose of acquiring by barter European utensils, which they valued very highly. The custom of cultivating small plantings, which were noted by Schomburgk, Koch-Grünberg, and Gheerbrandt (1955, p. 345), must also be of Caribe origin.

Y 241 174

Koch-Grünberg (1928, pp. 302-308) was able to publish the first vocabulary of a Yanoama language, and, as the same author points out, some words of Caribe origin can be distinguished in this idiom of the Uraricapará River, /184/ but almost all of them refer to utensils and cultivated plants of Caribe or European origin.

Y 114 192 194

The other group (Waica?) was visited by Koch-Grünberg four weeks after his first encounter with Yanoama people, with whom he lived in a rancheria on the Motomotó across from the Sierra Marutani. This group had relations with the Makú of the Auarí River, from whom they adopted certain cultural elements, such as agriculture. We do not have a vocabulary from this group, but, according to information given to Koch-Grünberg by his native companions, they speak the same Yanoama idiom with slight dialectal differences.

Y 114

Y [648] [177]

Y [197]

The expansion of the Casapare toward the north is of recent date, since their sworn enemies, the inhabitants of the Paragua, as well as the Pemón to the northeast, ceased their reprisals and allowed the unhindered advance of the Yanoama nomads. It seems that at the same time the Sanemá of the southwest and the Casapare began to invade the zone. At the present time, the Yanoama dominate as far as the Marí River, a left tributary of the Paragua (5° 10'). The Pemón to the east of the Paragua have vacated the space between this river and the Caroní. Their nuclei are to be found on the Gran Sabana, in the southeastern part of Venezuela. Under the joint influence of civilization and the mission they have lost their characteristics as Caribe

Y 167 648

Y [131]

P 131 [167]

P 177 797 161

P
199 /184 cont./ Casapare
799 expansionists, and their number at present is quite small; they Auake 555
161 number 1,800 individuals and show a density of 1:16.5 square kilometers. Pemon 55 16

Y
177 The Maycncon and Arecuna, along the north, do not make
648 an effective barrier to Yanoama expansion. Here, however they are liable to clash with the already advanced civilization of these regions where they will meet the Indian, the Negro, and the White with individual cultures irreducible by the Paleo-Indian culture of the Yanoama.

Y
101 Among the tribes which have been absorbed by the Yanoama
619 are the Kaliana, Auakí, etc., about whose identification there is some confusion in the literature.

Y
A
104 Kaliana, however, is the name which the Casapare give to the Sapé. The latter were identified as Kaliana by a native companion of Koch-Grünberg (1923, pp. 12-13; cf. idem, 1922, p. 227), while Armellada and Matallana (1942, p. 103) identify them with the name "Shirianá" (Casapare) as Karianapuik. In 1956 the Sapé (Kariana, Kaliana) were visited by Montoya, who classifies them as related to the "Shirishana" (1958, p. 168). "It is an isolated group," says Montoya, "which lives on the Antabarí River and upper Pao; in the zones of the upper Paragua and Paure-Murán River.

A
241 /185/ "They devote themselves to agriculture, but produce
433 only as much as they consume or a little more for barter with the
439 Shirianna who are travelers and supply them with salt and other items which they lack.

A
501 "Some of them have learned to make curiaras in such a rudimentary manner as to make the Moñongón Indians, the masters of this art, smile. But they do make very fragile 'shells,' which allow them to travel to hunting and fishing zones, carrying
A light loads.

582 "They marry frequently with the Shirianna groups and even
A with the Arekuna. They appear to be destined to disappear as
101 a differentiated ethnic group or to be totally absorbed by the Shirianna, more numerous and nearer than the Arekuna" (Montoya, ibid.).